FACT FLASH

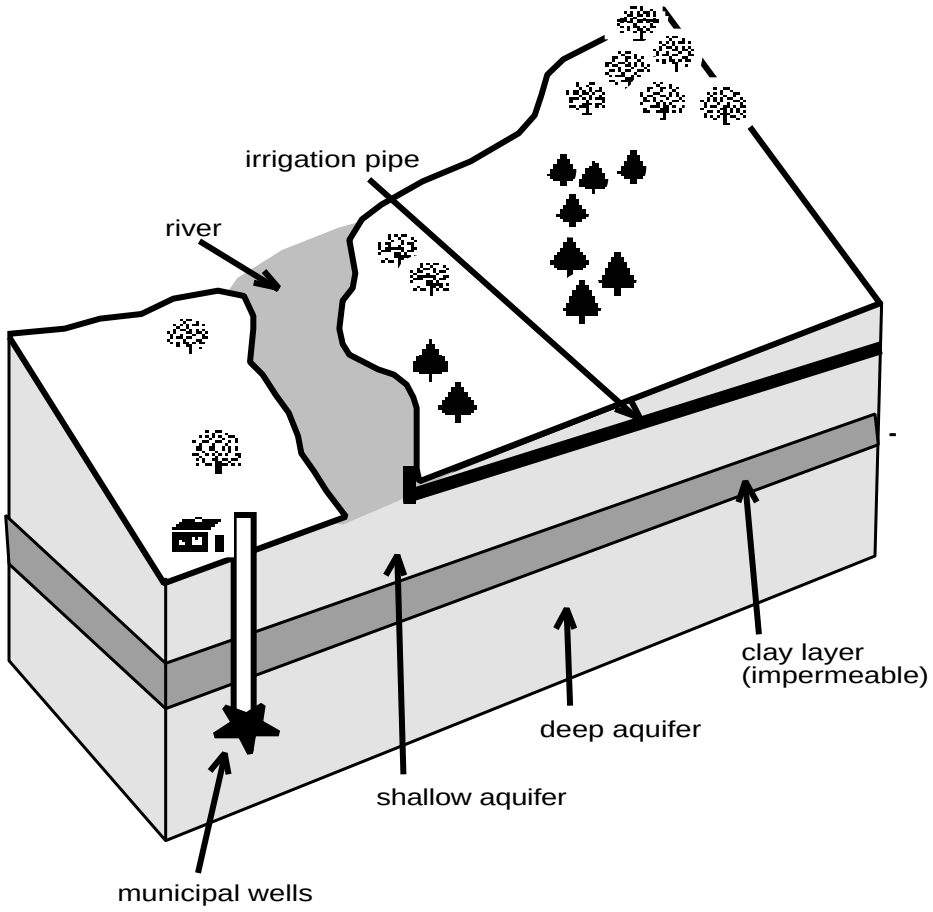
4: Flowing Railroad Site Investigation Results

EPA tested many samples taken from the site. Here are the results.

Groundwater

Nineteen groundwater monitoring wells were installed to analyze groundwater quality and movement. The studies show that:

- Two aquifers (underground rock formations storing groundwater) are in the immediate region, one shallow and one deep. The aquifers aren't connected.
- The shallow aquifer contains some hazardous substances from the site, including lead and high levels of TCE. Water in this aquifer is moving off-site, toward the Flowing River. No wells currently draw water from this aquifer, but the Flowing River is a major irrigation source for nearby farms.
- No contamination was found in the deep aquifer, which supplies water to the municipal wells.



Soil

Sixty soil samples taken from all around the site and from three nearby locations reveal:

- Only soil on the site itself is contaminated.
- High concentrations of TCE were found in the site's topsoil and in the soil up to 10 feet beneath the diked sludge pond.
- Copper, lead, and zinc were found in the soil by Jimmy's Battery Salvage site and the Railroad Tie Treatment Company building.
- PCBs were found in and just below the surface soil near the old Recycling Services, Inc., building.
- Asbestos was found in the surface soil near the demolished building.

Surface Water and Sediment

Ten surface water samples and six sediment samples (soil particles settled on the river bottom) from the Flowing River were analyzed to see if the site's hazardous contamination was affecting water quality or accumulating in the sediment. None of the samples showed any contamination.

Air

Air samples were collected from four locations to determine whether contamination from the site affects air quality nearby. Although no contaminants from the site were found in the air, strong winds could blow the topsoil away, releasing asbestos particles into the air.